

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
IO-13 SSM-03 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 MCT-01 /081 W  
-----010614Z 088657 /22

R 310944Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3498  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
USCINCEUR  
DIA WASHDC  
SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D N T I A L BEIRUT 1432

E.O. 1165: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, MILI, LE  
SUBJECT: IMPLICATIONS OF HANNA SAID'S DISMISSAL

REF: DAMASCUS 2070 (DTG 291618Z MAR 77)

1. WE FIND A GOOD DEAL OF TRUTH IN AP STRINGER'S ACCOUNT OF RECENT EVENTS IN LEBANON (ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT SYRIANS ARE PLANNING ASSASSINATION OF CHANOUN). AMINE GENAYEL'S REMARKS TO US (BEIRUT 1412) INDICATE PHALANGE IS RECONCILED TO NECESSITY OF WORKING WITH THE SYRIANS, EVEN THOUGH THEY DON'T LIKE IT. ALTHOUGH NOT ALL PHALANGIST THINK ALIKE, DIVISIONS WITHIN THE PARTY SHOULD NOT BE OVERESTIMATED. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT BECHIR GEMAYEL SOMETIMES SOUNDS MORE LIKE A CHAMOUNIST THAN A PHALANGIST, BUT SO FAR HE HAS BOWED TO PARY DISCIPLINE WHEN HIS FATHER  
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SPEAKS. SOME LOCAL OBSERVERS HAVE EVEN SUGGESTED THAT BECHIR'S RIGHT WING UTTERANCES ARE A DELIBERATE PHALANGE TACTIC TO PROTECT THE PARTY'S RIGHT FLANK FROM DEFECTION TO THE PNL.

2. IF WE ACCEPT THESIS THAT SYRIA WOULD LIKE TO WITHDRAW ITS ARMY FROM LEBANON AS SOON AS IT CAN DO SO GRACEFULLY

(WHILE RETAINING OF COURSE MAXIMUM POLITICAL LEVERAGE), THEN IT FOLLOWS THAT SYRIANS WOULD BE VERY UNHAPPY WITH CHAMOUN'S STUBBORN OPPOSITION TO REPLACEMENT OF HANNA SAID. SARKIS AND BOUTROS HAVE BEEN SAYING FOR MONTHS THAT FORMATION OF A TRULY LEBANESE ARMY WHICH COULD ASSUME SOME OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASF WAS IMPOSSIBLE AS LONG AS HANNA SAID WAS C IN C. NOW THAT HE HAS BEEN REPLACED A START CAN BE MADE TOWARDS REBUILDING THE ARMY AS A NATIONAL INSTITUTION. WHETHER SUFFICIENT PROGRESS CAN BE MADE BETWEEN NOW AND OCTOBER, 1977, WHEN ASF'S LATEST MANDATE EXPIRES, DEPENDS ON A NUMBER OF FACTORS, INCLUDING SKILL AND INTEREST OF NEW C IN C VICTOR KHOURY IN DEVELOPING COOPERATION BETWEEN CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM OFFICERS.

3. REMARK THAT FATAH, IN WAKE OF JUNBLATT'S DEATH, IS REACHING OUT TO MODERATE, TRADITIONAL POLITICIANS SUCH AS KARAME, SAEB SALAM, AND YAFI IS INTERESTING. ONE ISSUE ON WHICH ALL CHRISTIANS AND MANY MUSLIMS AGREE IS THAT PALESTINIANS MUST PLAY NO POLITICAL ROLE IN LEBANON AND AS MANY AS POSSIBLE MUST LEAVE THE COUNTRY. CHRISTIANS OFTEN ACCUSE SUNNIS OF BEING MORE ISLAMIC AND ARAB THAN LEBANESE AND THEREFORE UNTRUSTWORTHY. IF SUNNI-FATAH COOPERATION AGAIN BECOMES IMPORTANT, CHRISTIANS WOULD CONSIDER THEIR FEARS CONFIRMED AND PROSPECTS FOR POLITICAL RECONCILIATION IN LEBANON WILL BE SEVERELY DAMAGED. LEBANESE MUSLIM ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAIRO AGREEMENT MAY PROVIDE THE FIRST REAL CLUE. SARKIS, HAVING ASSERTED HIS AUTHORITY OVER THE CHRISTIANS BY NAMING A

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NEW ARMY COMMANDER, MAY NOW TRY TO PUSH THROUGH HIS TOUGH INTERPRETATION OF THE CAIRO ACCORDS AND ASK THE SYRIANS TO ENFORCE IT. IF HE DOES SO, HE WILL HAVE CHRISTIAN SUPPORT, BUT THE MUSLIMS, IF THEY ARE AGAIN MAKING GREAT MUSIC WITH FATAH, WILL BE PUT IN AN AWKWARD POSITION.  
PARKER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** IMPLICATIONS OF HANNA SAID'S DISMISSAL  
**TAGS:** PINT, MILI, LE  
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